

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 231871

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FOLLOWING TEL SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO DEA HQ WASHDC,
CINCPAC HONOLULU FROM BANGKOK SEPT 16:

QUOTE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE BANGKOK 25858

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SNAR, TH
SUBJECT: DRUG RELATED CRIME IN THAILAND

SUMMARY: OFFICIAL INTEREST IN AND CONCERN OVER THE NARCOTICS
PROBLEM IN THAILAND CONTINUES TO SHOW A SLOW BUT STEADY IN-
CREASE. END SUMMARY.

1. ACCORDING TO NEWSPAPERS OF SEPTEMBER 16, GOVERNMENT PARTIES
SPOKESMAN DR. AKHOM SONSURACHAT ANNOUNCED ON SEPTEMBER 15 THAT
THE RTG WILL SEEK A SPECIAL 38 MILLION BAHT FUND FOR A DRUG
REHABILITATION PROGRAM TO BE ADDED TO THE FOURTH NATIONAL ECONOMIC
AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN, WHICH IS SCHEDULED TO BEGIN IN FISCAL
YEAR 1977 (COMMENCES OCTOBER 1, 1976). DR. AKHOM INDICATED
THAT ONE OF THE TARGETS OF THE PROGRAM WILL BE TO REDUCE
DRUG RELATED CRIME. HE CITED CRIME STATISTICS FROM MARCH TO
JULY OF 1976 WHICH, HE SAID, INDICATED THAT 47 PERCENT OF CRIM-
INAL OFFENSES WERE COMMITTED BY DRUG ADDICTS. HE ALSO CLAIMED
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PAGE 02 STATE 231871

THAT THAILAND NOW HAS 600,000 ADDICTS (EMBASSY FEELS THAT

THESE FIGURES ARE INFLATED, BUT THERE ARE NO RELIABLE FIGURES AVAILABLE).

2. DRUG RELATED CRIME IS CERTAINLY A SERIOUS PROBLEM IN THAILAND, AND PUBLIC ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THIS BY THE GOVERNMENT IS ENCOURAGING. NEWSPAPERS ARE ALSO SHOWING AN INCREASED INTEREST IN THE PROBLEM. NEWSPAPERS OF SEPTEMBER 15 CARRIED NEWS OF THE ARREST OF A 19 YEAR OLD DELIVERY BOY CAUGHT STEALING TO SUPPORT HIS DRUG HABIT (THE ACCOUNT SAID THE BOY CLAIMED TAKING SEVEN "SHOTS" OF HEROIN PER DAY). IN A MORE SERIOUS CRIME, A POLICE CORPORAL WAS SHOT DEAD IN A GUN BATTLE WITH THREE ADDICTS WHO WERE ROBBING A TAXI DRIVER IN THONBURI. OTHER POLICE OFFICERS SHOT AND WOUNDED ONE OF THE GANG, AND THEN CAPTURED ALL THREE. TWO OF THE GANG WERE SOLDIERS.

3. THIRTY-EIGHT (38) MILLION BAHT (U.S.\$1.9 MILLION) WILL DO LITTLE TO SOLVE THAILAND'S DRUG PROBLEM, OR TO STOP THE ALARMING INCREASE IN ADDICTION AND RELATED CRIME. BUT RECOGNITION OF THE PROBLEM IS A MINIMAL FIRST STEP. BURKE UNQUOTE ROBINSON

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